

Former CIA agent details string of agency woes

By LAURIE DENDER

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Apparently, there is no love lost between Ralph McGehee and his former employer — the Central Intelligence Agency.

"It was a total police sort of organization violating every principle under which it had been established," McGehee said during a Thursday evening talk at Sinclair Community College.

And the former agent, a self-admitted "dirty tricks operator" for his entire 25-year career with the agency, now spends much of his time warning American citizens about what he sees as excesses of the CIA.

McGehee said he became disillusioned about the CIA after he read incorrect information on foreign governments being distributed by the agency. Although he had collected data and written a report about conditions in Thailand during the late 1960s, McGehee said when he got back to the United States he read intelligence reports that conflicted with what he had observed and written.

HE SAID he complained and was placed on probation.

His disillusionment grew after he volunteered to go to Vietnam. He began looking for another job, but he had no takers since he had no job experience other than as a CIA agent. And he couldn't admit to that.

Finally leaving the CIA, McGehee wrote a book, *Deadly Deceits*, detailing his experiences. But he said the CIA made 400 deletions in the initial manuscript. He fought for two years and the book was finally published last year.

Although he admits the United States needs the "best intelligence agency money can buy" McGehee said we do not have it.

Instead, he claims that the CIA is involved in improper activities, from toppling governments disliked by

American policy makers to planting false stories about communists using chemical warfare to create yellow rain in Laos and Thailand.

AND THE CIA has had 400 reporters planted in various media outlets to repress or plant stories, he said.

McGehee also claims the CIA currently is trying to overthrow 10 governments.

Asked why he hasn't been "totaled" by an agency that he says is capable of toppling governments, McGehee said, "I'm still here."

But he also claimed that he was under surveillance and that his telephone was tapped.

"I was talking to another critic of the CIA and the guy monitoring the conversation broke in and started hollering at us," McGehee said.

When members of the audience expressed disbelief about what he was saying, McGehee said it did not please him to talk about it.

"I went through a hellish trauma," McGehee said. "I'm asking you to believe in an hour what it took me 20 years to believe."

But he said he thought it was essential that he continue speaking around the country so that Americans "know the truth."